

find that the lady had slipped out. She hadn't bought, and neither would the writer if the matter had been left to the man in charge. The incident just shows how inattention can spoil business. It is one thing to bother a customer when he simply drops in to have a look round, another to lose him by neglect.

THE BEST SELLING HOLIDAY BOOKS.

THE holiday trade in Montreal this season was quite equal to that of the past year, though the tradesmen, owing to unfair competition from certain parties—to whom BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER has had occasion to refer before—had to content themselves with a very narrow margin of profit.

One very striking and favorable feature about the holiday demand for books this year was the enquiry for works in a superior class of binding. A canvass of the trade elicited the fact that this tendency was becoming more and more marked each year. It is a point worthy of the bookbinders' attention, for by giving a more varied range of style in binding, the turnover of high-class, properly bound novels would certainly be increased. This at least is the opinion of several of the leading Montreal booksellers.

Some reports gathered from leading firms in regard to the holiday trade in Montreal may be interesting, and they are appended.

Manager Brophy, of the Montreal News Co., reported that his company had experienced a phenomenal demand for cloth-bound works of Ian Maclaren, especially "Bonnie Brier Bush" and "Auld Lang Syne."

W. Foster Brown said that he had never met with a better demand for single copies in cloth and half calf of the popular novels. When he closed on Christmas Eve he was completely sold out of what he considered an ample stock of the following: "Men of the Moss Hags" (Crockett), "Red Cockade" (Weyman), "Chronicles of Count Antonio" (Hope), "Auld Lang Syne," "Bonnie Brier Bush" (Maclaren), "Sorrows of Satan," and others. In fact, there had been an unusual demand for fine bound works of such authors as Stevenson, Eugene Field and Whitcomb Riley.

W. Drysdale & Co said that there was a decided and growing taste for the better class of binding. They had a larger turnover of half calf binding, than ever before. Blackmore's latest work "Slain by the Drones," which had reached the market in time, was one of their best sellers. The same could be said of Washington Irving's "Tales of a Traveler," with steel engravings, which was put up two volumes in one case for \$6 by Putnams. A complete set of Browning's poems in one volume, cloth \$3

and half cost \$6, had also sold remarkably well, as did also some of Mrs. Sangster's poems, such as "Little Knights" and "On the Road Home."

AN AMATEUR PUBLISHER.

It is a common fallacy shared by the majority of people that anyone can run a newspaper, be his own publisher, or manage a hotel successfully. Anyone would suppose that a hard-headed, shrewd business man, who had made a striking success in his own particular line, would be the last person in the world to be taken in by this popular delusion. But the old adage about people being more daring than the angels still holds good. Previous to the holidays the proprietor of one of the largest Montreal departmental stores conceived the idea that he could get up and publish a holiday paper that would compete with the numbers published by the regular illustrated weeklies. If this gentleman had taken the trouble to enquire of the veriest tyro in the newspaper business he might not have made the venture. The public nowadays are too wide-awake for experiments of this sort, and those who are acquainted with all the intricacies of the publishing trade, and the amount of work and expense that a really first-class number of this sort entails unless specially equipped for the work, would hesitate over the venture, let alone a complete outsider. Well, the merchant got out the number in question; he has got the most of them yet, and the less said about the matter the better.

REVIVAL OF BOOK PEDDLING.

"Canada is likely to experience a great revival in book peddling." This was the remark made by a well-known publisher and jobber of Toronto the other day, and the speaker backed up his assertion by a line of argument which he considered well founded.

Such a revival, if it comes, is to naturally follow the growing desire of the consumer to have his wants supplied with the least trouble and inconvenience to himself, and when we look back over the years we must be impressed with the changes in favor of the public that have come over our methods of doing business.

Twenty years ago or thereabouts the needs of the book buyer were not very promptly attended to. If a customer wanted a particular book he gave his order to the local dealer, who sent to England for it, and brought it out anywhere within the course of two or three months.

Gradually, however, the purchasers of books became more numerous, and the sellers of books more enterprising. Then the dealers began to keep the leading publications of the day in stock, and the customer had only to visit a news-stand to obtain what he desired.

Lately the wants of the consumer have been catered to even more effectively than

ever before, as a result of the springing up of the departmental stores. These city establishments sell books to the people at cut rates, and even send what a man wants to outside points at reduced prices, post or express prepaid.

All these gradual changes have spoiled the public to such an extent that they may soon demand that their books be brought to their very doors by pedlars.

All these reflections and prognostications are not very welcome to our retail booksellers, and it behooves them if they would ward off such a culmination that they throw additional energy into their business and make a point of promptly catering to the wants of all consumers.

PUBLISHERS ARE WAITING.

According to men who should know whereof they speak, a marked revival of printing and publishing is likely to follow the passage of the amended Copyright bill.

It is expected that as a result of the visit recently paid Canada by Messrs. Hall Caine and Daldy, the assent of the English interests will be given the measure in time for the Government to bring it down at the present session of the Dominion Parliament.

Of course, the political crisis at Ottawa may delay the required legislation for a time, but it is hoped that such a settlement of the political difficulties will be forthcoming as will ensure the speedy adoption of the bill in question.

And, as stated before, when once the bill has become an Act this country will probably see a welcome improvement in printing and associate industries.

If Toronto may be taken as a criterion, this prophecy will undoubtedly be fulfilled, for it is known that at least three prominent and reliable city firms are only awaiting the adoption of the bill to launch out into the publishing business on a large scale.

TORONTO CHRISTMAS TRADE.

As far as Toronto is concerned the dealers seem to have done a fairly good business at Christmas time.

We are informed that two or three booksellers had the best holiday trade in years. We learn that at least one establishment sold more Christmas cards and calendars than ever before, and it is said that large sales were made in dolls, toys and fancy goods generally.

Of course the wet weather that prevailed interfered to some extent with business, and grumbling is heard in some quarters about "the poor Christmas trade," but on the whole the season seems to have passed off in a way fairly satisfactory to the dealers.

The departmental stores, as heretofore, made considerable inroads into the legitimate dealers' trade, but did not by any means do all the business that was done. Instances